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A Sense of the South: COVID-19 Images

Kieran Rundle
Old Dominion University

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A Sense of the South

Capturing Coronavirus

Kieran Rundle



A Sense of the South
Capturing Coronavirus

A Sense of 2020

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For information contact:

Kieran Rundle
www.kieranrundleproductions.com

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A Sense of the South

*a documentary look at the effect of
Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)
on the economy of southern small towns
in the United States of America
during the summer of 2020*

CREATED BY KIERAN RUNDLE

A Kieran Rundle Production

Thank you to the many people who made this possible. Without you, these stories would never be recorded.

There are a few people who played major roles . . .

Dr. Eddie Hill, Director of ODU Undergraduate Research, and Dean Metzger of the Perry Honors College provided the resources, support, and initial belief that required this project to come into existence.

Dustin Shores, my faculty mentor and a photography professor at ODU, pushed me to be the best creative I could be and challenged me to exceed my self imposed limitations.

Steven, Rebecca, and Kevin Rundle encouraged every single outlandish idea I have ever had, including this one when it first began.

Natalie Dyke traveled with me in the passenger seat and held my hand every step of the way.

Lily O’Hara gave me countless hours of time proofreading, with only an iced coffee in return.

I am also exceedingly grateful to every person in every town who dedicated their time and opened their thoughts gave me a piece of the story.

For them I am the most thankful. They let me into their world and lives, allowing me to tell their stories in conjunction with one another.

I can only hope I did them justice.

The Old Dominion University

Undergraduate Research and Creativity Grant

Juniors and seniors at ODU are eligible to apply for the Research and Creativity Grant. They must have a 3.25 grade point average and be enrolled in a full semester of classes during their projected research time.

I applied for the summer 2020 grant. After working for the student news magazine for three years, I felt confident in my journalistic knowledge. I wanted to combine this with my Photography major and Art History minor to create something new.

In my proposal, I outlined a qualitative research project. After months of waiting, I received the email I was hoping for: I won. Within two weeks, I started a video blog to keep record of the journey. I packed and set off for my great American road trip. For six weeks I lived in my car.

My days involved interviewing people and spending times in time in small businesses. During the nights I camped and stayed at motels while taking notes from the day and searching for wifi.

Over those six weeks, I made connections that will always stay with me and uncovered a deeper impact of Coronavirus than just the sickness.

As I write this, the Coronavirus pandemic continues to ravage the country.

During June 2020, when states began to open after quarantine shutdowns, I drove through the southern United States on a photographic mission.

I mapped out a route from North Carolina to Arkansas, stopping at communities away from cities, to see how the omnipresent virus reached its tendrils out to remote areas. These places have a population between 500 and 1,000 people and were founded on either a railroad, river, or both. This links them to history, before cars were a consistent transportation method.

With my camera and notebook in hand, I drove head first into the unknown.

Between conversation and documentary photography, I captured the struggle to reopen and begin life while still in a quarantine. Governors attempted to aid the economy by loosening restrictions but the threat of Coronavirus steadily continued.

By the end of 2020, the Center of Disease Control reported that over a quarter of a million Americans died from COVID-19.

All COVID-19 statistics found in this book are directly from the CDC. All population statistics are from the 2018 United States Population Census.

While each state has specific timelines and different details for each phase, these are the basic guidelines for the three phases of reopening.

Phase One

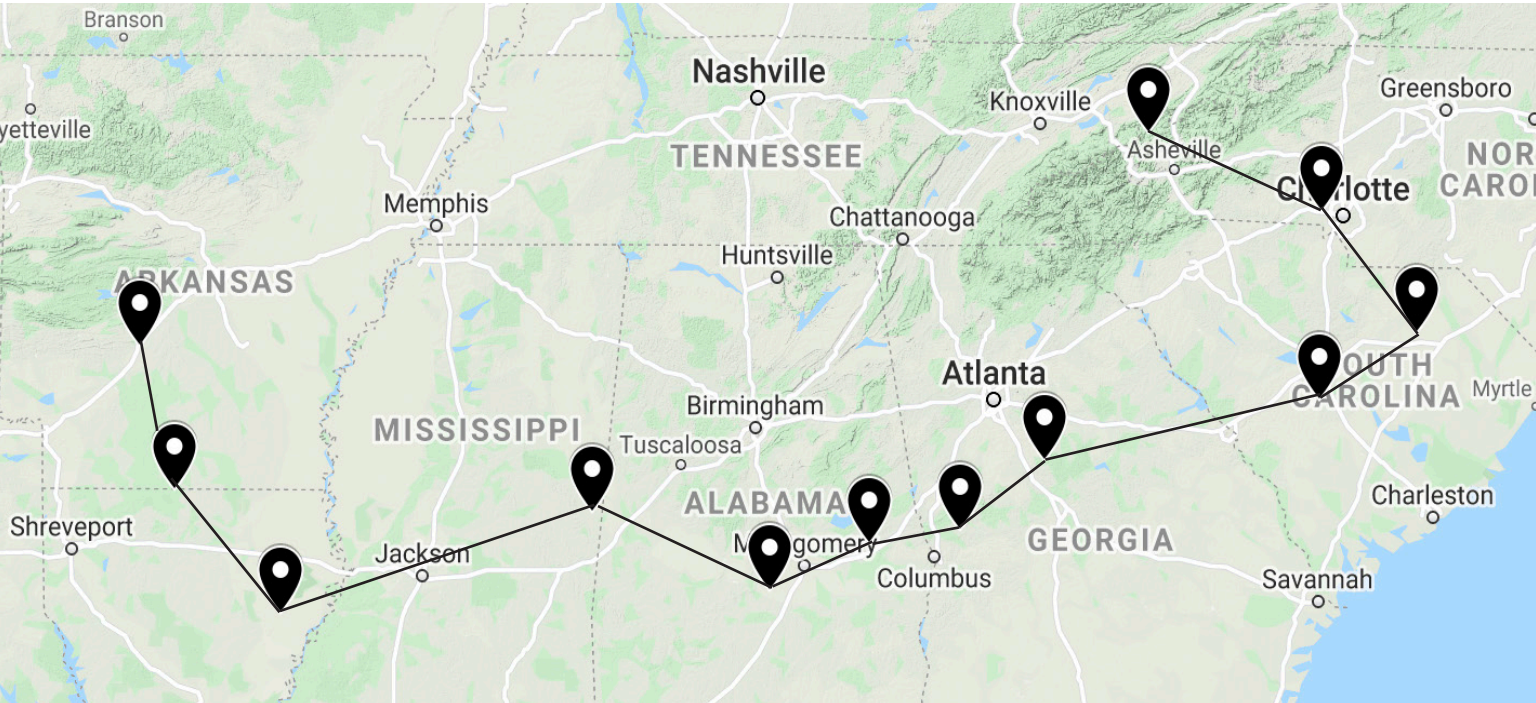
- High risk individuals shelter in place
- Social gatherings of up to 10 people are permitted
- Nonessential travel is discouraged
- Teleworking is encouraged
- Public places and venues remain closed to visitors

Phase Two

- High risk individuals shelter in place
- Social gatherings of up to 50 people are permitted
- Nonessential travel can resume
- Teleworking is encouraged
- Schools reopen
- Bars, restaurants, and most businesses open to 50%

Phase Three

- All individuals can interact in public, while participating in social distancing
- Employers can reopen as normal
- Hospital and senior facilities can have visitors
- All venues may open using social distance protocols



1.	Hot Springs	North Carolina
2.	McAdenville	North Carolina
3.	Lydia	South Carolina
4.	Swansea	South Carolina
5.	Flovilla	Georgia
6.	Waverly Hall	Georgia
7.	Mosses	Alabama
8.	Notasulga	Alabama
9.	Scooba	Mississippi
10.	Wisner	Louisiana
11.	Junction City	Louisiana/Arkansas
12.	Caddo Valley	Arkansas

The common symptoms of Coronavirus are a cough, fever, a loss of smell or taste, a sore throat, congestion, nausea, fatigue, chills, difficulty breathing, a headache, and body aches.

Symptoms may appear within 14 days of exposure.

To be “exposed”, one must be within six feet for 15 minutes or more with someone who has symptoms or tested positive. Until receiving a negative test, or 14 days since contact, the exposed person needs to “isolate at home”.

If someone tests positive, they must quarantine for two weeks. This is not dependant on if they exhibit symptoms or not.



Hot Springs

North Carolina

Population: 576

Tucked away in the foothills of the Pisgah National Forest, the Appalachian Trail ran straight across the historical railroad tracks and the main street of Hot Springs. The French broad river flowed past the town border.

On a typical summer day, the laughter of kayakers and families on inter tubes bubbled over the rushing river. Vacation rentals and the resort teemed with people.

Hikers pitched their tents along the banks, wandering into town to grab a bite to eat.

During the summer of 2020, all was quiet.

Small motorcycle groups rode along the scenic byway and stopped for the afternoon or a night, then go on their way the next morning. Occasional thru-hikers stumbled out of the forest, only to find the doors of the hostels locked with cobwebs growing in the corner of the door frame.

Hot Springs was one of many tourist towns that fell victim to the mandatory COVID-10 business closings.

“Even a one family group can be considered a ‘mass gathering’. Work is on pause. I don’t knows how long this is for.”

“I’m not worried about us. We take care of our own, grow our own food, and going into town isn’t necessary.”

“I wear my mask to work every day and I’m not going to take it off. While we in Hot Springs don’t really go out, we have tourists coming in here from all across the country. . . . If the anti-maskers are right, I look silly. If they’re wrong, I could kill my grandma when I go home.”

“Even without shutting down, I made enough to get by.
There’s no money saved up for the winter. ㄩㄩ

--Aaron, owner of the Tobacco and Convenience store



The Spring Creek Tavern remained closed until the first week of June after waiting to see if cases surged when bans lifted.

After patrons exited, a server slid by the table to wipe it down and place a small hourglass.

The sand ran out at the same time the cleaning product finished sizzling. Servers then ushered new customers in from outside to their seat.

All staff wore gloves as they served food on take out plates to limit any hand to hand contact.

While the virus mostly spreads through droplets in the air caused by speaking or breathing, it also spreads through touching infected surfaces.

If a plate at a restaurant is touched by someone infected and then is not sanitized before a customer eats from it, the virus could be transmitted from the hand of the server to the mouth of the customer.

Wearing gloves significantly lowers this possibility for contact on either side. The germs are trapped on either side of the rubber barrier, keeping them from being shared with others.





McAdenville

North Carolina

Population: 666

In the heat of June, Christmas lights still line the branches of pine trees. Geese honked at each other, protecting the lake in the center of town from human disruption. They waddled along the side walks to main street and off to the suburbs.

Every winter, McAdenville erupted into a brilliant, colorful, winter haven. In 2011, they coined the name “Christmas Town USA”. They remain on *USA Today’s* list of top 10 holiday destinations.

Each night in December, the roads sparkled with light and Santa meets the visitors. While not technically required in contracts, every single house set up decorations in their yards. It was tradition.

Coronavirus plunged the town into darkness. The historic areas were not lit this year.

For the first time in 65 years, there was no tree lighting or yule log ceremony. The 5k moved to online rather than a community event. Few homeowners set up decorations, not wanting to draw people towards their houses.

The Women’s Club delivered Christmas Town 2020 shirts and gear individually door to door rather than set up their normal booth. Shops remained open to gather what business they could.

No one took pictures with Santa.

“Everything at the court was placed on hold. Adoptions, violence charges, bail hearings . . . after a few weeks we were considered ‘essential’ enough to open. Over 3,000 cases built up. Right now the executive order says no one can be evicted. People are taking this ‘I won’t have to pay this rent’. Once we catch up, there are going to be a lot of angry landlords coming through my office.”

“In the early 2000s, University of North Carolina in Charlotte did a paper survey the 23 days the lights were on. Over 600,000 people traveled to McAdenville for the Christmas miracles. We did okay during the shutdowns because our tourist season is so far away. If we’re shut down again in December, who knows.”

Steve Rankin dedicated his career to capturing the soul of McAdenville.

Not only was he the town photographer, he even helped write the history book on it. The Rankins have lived in McAdenville for generations. Even though suburbs sprawl for miles beyond Main Street now, Steve is just as involved with local happenings.

In late March, Steve helped plan some impromptu Christmastown cheer. If anything could make people feel better during their quarantine: it was Santa.

Placed on the back of a convertible, Santa rode around town to check on the children. Within two days, that came to a forced end.

Even a police escort could not keep social distancing practices in place. People swarmed the car and as word leaked out, even started driving in from out of town to see the spectacle of Christmastown in March.



Floyd & Blackies Bakery



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Christmastown
Signature
Gallery



Lydia

South Carolina

Population: 642

An hour away from the Darlington Raceway sit the rolling fields of Lydia. While the land encompassing Lydia is vast, the people are few and far between. The population is scattered across the fields and because of its comparison to the geography, Lydia barely makes it on the census anymore. Lydia is an unincorporated community, meaning that there is no town center anymore.

Driving on the roads, plantations passed outside the car windows followed by clumps of trailer parks and farmland. Large center pivot irrigation sprinklers rolled across the green land, spraying clear water on high crops under the sun. Soy bean farms used smaller lines of drip irrigation.

In summers before, visitors from across South Carolina and the surrounding states drove in to see Lydia Plantation, a historic place named on the US National Register. Now the gates are closed.

Many locally run gas stations showed no signs stating reopening plans.

With factory shut downs and production halts, Lydia residents almost have to commute into the city for work.

Churches locked and bolted their doors. Visitors were not welcome or allowed.

“We’re already socially distanced around here. COVID would have to sneak into the cornstalks to get to us.”



Lydia Soybeans Inc. was permanently closed despite the lush crops growing in neat rows behind it.

They opened in the 1960s as a grain and field bean wholesaler.

Empty silos loomed behind the small main office shack. The sand around it was dry and cracked. The cement bricks of the building itself held hard and unwavering despite the incessant heat.

The green hues of beans in the back reminded onlookers of the life that once thrived there.





“The factory layoffs have been hard. My customers are coming in facing the most difficult economic hardships I have ever seen.”

--Haley, owner of Kemmerlin Insurance

Swansea

South Carolina

Population: 946

In the downtown area, buildings scattered around the train track. The roads slanted with raised sidewalks from when horse and buggy was the common mode of transportation. The lifted walkways allowed for an easy dismount.

The brick sign with the town name posted on it curved around a pavilion. In the center of the concrete, a large fountain sparkled. Well cared for little green shrubs with pink blooms lined the edge of the circle.

However, the park showed the effects of COVID-19. Caution tape waved in the breeze, falling off of swingsets, warning about social distancing protocols.

“We made new hours to try and make up for lost sales. The issue is that people don’t know about them. We don’t really use the internet and no one’s out driving around yet. I don’t know what to do so that everyone who works here can get paid and we can keep going too”

Only one of the antique stores doors was pushed open. A sign at the front of the street promoted new hours and broadcasted the reopening. New sale announcements revealed the permanent closing of the coffee shop. Sugarbaker’s Cafe posted their limited take out hours.

Forgotten and dusty campaign signs lined lawns in hope that the upcoming election would bring relief to the struggling businesses.

Despite the dismal feeling across the land, the to-go boiled peanuts and snow cone shack on the highway out of town continued to make smiles come back.

“Honestly, without the restaurants I haven’t known what to do. My husband loves the food so much he refuses to even eat take out from [the next town over]. Now all we eat is Paparonis and it’s so good, but eventually we need to shake it up.”



“This is our first day open again! We missed so much of the early summer. I’m just here to cheer on the boys.”

--Michelle, getting her car washed



At Fields' Automotive, tax season is the annual sales boom. Banks often promote lower interest rates on loans at that time. That is also time to get all of last year's cars off the lot and start pushing sales of new ones. People are ready to buy as their tax returns come back and the new cars appear.

Dana and Randy Fields find that to be their favorite time of the year. They love both the fun and high point of lot movement.

COVID-19 shutdowns hit right when they were preparing for the big sales.

Once they reopened, Dana pushed everything she could out to auction immediately. This was an attempt to earn some of the monetary gap of spring and early summer back.

While working in a male dominated business, Dana learned how to fight for what she wants and prepared to work harder for the rest of the year. Her passion and love was selling cars and she learned in the beginning how to be tough. She and her husband have worked in car sales for decades.





Flovilla

Georgia

Population: 658

Indian Springs State Park, right beside Flovilla, dazzled tourists with its healing waters. Campers gathered from the forest to lay on smooth rocks emerging out of tumbling river water.

At the bottom of the hill, a fountain with a tap allowed for people to fill up jugs and drink the pure water.

Not that long ago, the town was a tourist hub. The Indian Spring Lodge was a resort. It now decays and the land melds into the cemetery beside it. Closed well before this summer, it is a reminder of what buildings become after staying closed without care for too long.

“We allow ten people inside at a time, making sure they are all spaced out. At the entrance we have sanitation stations that they are required to use.”

“Wearing masks is not a big deal. If you see people, they’re pretty much the people you’ve been seeing all along.”

Coronavirus precautions required the spring well to be roped off. No one was allowed to touch or share the waters. While the world could use a little touch of magic, sharing water and drinking from the same fountain was counterproductive.

People mingled at the banks of the river rocks, most too nervous to get into the cold water despite the blazing sun because they would have to share it. Other people frolicked in it anyways, choosing the bliss of the water over caution.

A quiet town loss was The Little Free Library. The stand had a dark lock on it to prevent infected hands exchanging paper backs.

“My sons and I are a bit past cautious to the point of just jittery. This is the south for goodness! All we want to do is hug and greet people! Now, I stay six feet away from even my adult kids. We all work with other people. I’m too scared that I’ll be the one to end up accidentally killing someone.”

In March, hoarders struck the shops. All across America, people shoved cleaning supplies and paper goods into shopping carts.

Stores put limits on how many items in certain categories people could buy at one time- if they could even find them. Shelves stood bare of sanitary wipes and toilet paper. Disposable masks and latex gloves fell into the same problem.

Even mass corporate online stock ran out. With people teleworking, it was difficult for them to increase production numbers.

As mask requirements began popping up in different states and cities, the crisis continued. People turned to making their own out of t-shirts and bananas. Information was limited about what people could do to stay protected if they had to go outside. Disagreements over mask types or security arose.

In the following months, the shoppers calmed down. Factory workers went back to work. Shelves were restocked. Masks went from being a hard to find item to an abundant supply. People started shopping not just for any mask they could find, but ones that went with their outfits. With no end of the restrictions in sight, masks became a part of daily life and a necessity.





“My friend, a vivacious woman full of life, passed away from COVID-19. No one could even hold her hand. . . it’s a lonely death.”

--Ethan, estate salesman

Waverly Hall

Georgia

Population: 747



A long green lawn stretched down the middle of town with benches and a soft running path for exercise. A highway ran straight through the middle of the town, slicing it in half.

The businesses were connected to one another. Inside a relatively small clothing boutique was a hair salon, sun tanning, and even small, closet sized room rented to a woman who sold holistic CBD products.

An outdoor antique and knick knack store also functioned as a place where the owner’s friend sold art on consignment. The whole town worked together to create little store clusters.

In June, for the first time in months, neighbors saw each other. Business partners joined together again.

Three restaurants closed during the state shut down and had no plan to reopen. A banner hung over a Thai restaurant planning to open in May. Instead of being able to open on time, construction workers just restarted the project.

When one store had to shut down, all of the businesses in the same building closed too.

Despite the economic collapse of the restaurant industry, hope was found again simply by having the ability to see loved ones again.

“My classes just started again. They have to be small and spaced out, but honestly I liked them small anyways. I missed my community. So far none of the older people have come back but I know we’ll get there.”

“Most times, people stopped to eat on their way to or from work down the highway. Now, no one’s working. No one’s stopping in. There’s silence in most places here. I miss the Topsy Tomato pizza place already.”

“Town hall is still closed but for voting an exception was made. Everything is spaced apart and we take cleaning very seriously Everywhere is blocked except the polls. No one can come in without a mask and that’s that. No mask, no vote.”

“I live here but work in the city. I’m bringing city germs in. I don’t go to the places open now. I feel guilty about not supporting them but I’d feel worse if a bunch of cases popped up right after I did.”



Gas prices dropped significantly during the start of the pandemic because of the travel bans. Since no one was going anywhere, no one was buying gas. There was simply no demand.

Behind Luke's Pub, the gas sign promoted its \$1.89 gallon prices.

Before March, most gas prices were above \$2.50 a gallon. Some stations prices dropped over a dollar less than before. Out at Luke's Pub, gas almost seemed expensive for the time.

“Voting now is more important than ever,
especially during these trying times.”

-- Georgia, poll officer



Mosses

Alabama

Population: 905

Between churches and fields, sat the few buildings that composed the main area. The Meat Market and the Water Systems Building neighbored a recreation area, a cemetery, and the local school.

Buildings were either in disrepair and have been for what appears to be years, or are open for business. There was no middle ground in Mosses. People came in and out of the Meat Market while the woman running the Water Systems’ phone rang consistently with customers calling.

Church doors were even open, allowing communities to come together.

New homes were in the building process, bringing more people into the little town. The projects just restarted as people came back to work.

The basket ball courts for recreation and the school continued their forlorn abandonment.

Other than the roped off entry ways, it appeared as though children could be coming in or out at any moment. The orange caution cones for bus traffic stayed in the parking lot.

When the people left, they did not know how long it would be before they were allowed back.

“Between the cotton and cows, we haven’t seen COVID. All I know is that the kids are bored and the parents are doing their best.”





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“Sometimes, I just gotta dance out the stress.”

--Austin, man hanging outside of the meat market

Notasulga

Alabama

Population: 803

The town converged at a single stop light. The four roads that met all ran in different directions on the hill.

A family owned restaurant, an antique shop, the town hall, and an empty brick building converged at this junction. They met up between the mountains and right off of the bridge over the train tracks.

On the edge of town, the house that was once the original train station remained. It was just purchased and a family is keeping the original work while fixing it up into something livable as no one has been there in years.

Other than the barber shop and the antique store, practically everything else was considered an essential business in Alabama. Town hall being closed caused the most disruption as it changed how bills had to be paid.

MKZ Mexican Grill changed to take out and Waffle House followed corporate policy. The Grill still only was open for take out, but Waffle House upgraded to having every other seat open.

Hidden between the hills in the lush green trees, from the outside, the town looked as though not much changed.

“I never shut down. I work from my garage and sell things from my living room. Who was going to come tell me to pack up and close my house down?”





Independent businesses were not the only ones impacted by COVID-19 rules and shut downs.

While most guidelines varied by state, corporate chains often chose to make established rules for all of their stores, even if states gave the okay for certain things.

Ending the 2020 year, most large retail clothing stores such as Dillards or Belk opened one or two of their fitting rooms per store so that they are easier to sanitize. In certain stores, within open fitting rooms, every other stall is locked off for social distancing.

Starbucks Coffee offered take out, grab and go, and drive through. Only a few of their coffee shops offered indoor seating.

J.C. Penny and Pier 1 were only two of the stores to file for bankruptcy.

Broadway shut down for the entirety of the 2020 season.

Movie theaters such as Regal and AMC briefly reopened before shutting down again.

Airlines faced devastating losses.

Millions of Americans lost jobs or were furloughed because of the virus.

“If anything, orders increased. I’ve been working here since ‘92 and nothing really changed. The same people are buying the same amount. ”

-- Keith, lumber warehouse worker



Scooba

Mississippi

Population: 687

The campus of East Mississippi Community College sprawled out across the majority of town. The flags on the football stadium swayed and posters of campus activities were taped on every wall or window possible.

The residence halls had large labels on them outlining who lived inside the building and how to enter.

The town itself was lost to time. The townhouse style buildings on the main street have crumbled and plants busted out of boarded windows.

Signs on the road pointed to the new town hall, as the other one sits forgotten on the decrepit old main street.

“First the signs started going up, wash your hands, all that stuff. Then they posted on every door about not entering if you felt sick. After that they started to take over the bulletin boards. You’d see the kids trying to lift them up to see anything else. After that, things got weird. Edgy. No one saw it coming.”

EMCC looked as though students could come running home at any time. The doors to the student center still swung open.

Fruit sat in bowls on open tables in the dining hall.

In the hallways of the media room in the football stadium, popcorn remained in the machine. It waited for the next person to wipe it out and start the buttery process over again. The water fountain by the ticket stall was stuck spewing water as if practice was about to end and players would run up in a few minutes.

Instead, it had been on for weeks.

“They went home and never came back. It’s scary quiet now. They thought they were going home for a few days- if even. The kids in the dorms never moved out. All their stuff is still just sitting there. No one came back to lock up or pack up. It’s like everyone died.”





“This campus is closed. No one is permitted on the grounds and haven’t been since spring break.”

--Campus police officer



Wisner

Louisiana

Population: 913



Soybean and corn farms joined processing plants in lining the roads. Cypress trees emerged from marshy water outside the town lines.

The downtown buildings already gave themselves up and allowed modern day to skip past. The store fronts were spray painted over. Little newspaper boxes gathered together, appearing to offer the daily updates from the outside world. Instead, they were empty. Only dust collected inside.

The necessary places to the town such as the notary office, the police station, the town hall, and the post office had new limited hours or no hours posted.

There was no word about when things will move forward or change back to some kind of normal.

The small businesses that remained in Wisner opened up and hoped for business.

“Masks are nice and all, but at the end of the day you’ve gotta just keep going and let the customers do what they’re gonna do.”



“At first the library just closed. Then it offered a form of to-go reading. Now it lets the kids go in again but only with masks.”

--Wisner town local

TOWN OF WISNER
ROBERT MARC MCCARTY, MAYOR
P.O. BOX 290 - WISNER, LA 707
PHONE (337) 728-6464 - FAX (337) 728-6464
Email: townofwisner@wisnerla.gov

Council Members
ELLIOT BRITT
NETTIE BROWN
JO CALDWELL
ROGER HILLIARD
THOMAS LEMLE

Chief of Police
WILLIAM BEACH

Town Clerk
COURTNEY TANNHILL

Effective Wednesday April 1st, 2020

Wisner Town Hall hours will be as follows:

Monday – Thursday 7:30 am – 5:00 pm
Friday 7:30 am – 11:30 am
Closed Saturday and Sunday

Lobby is
CLOSED! If you
are needing to
pay a water bill,
knock on the
door!

NO Faxes or
Copies are
being done at
this time!



Junction City

Louisiana & Arkansas

Population: 943

The state line divides the town in half. Population, land, businesses, and politics were all severed in the middle. To create a full picture of the town, one must spend equal times in both states.

Having different laws and taxes lead to some issues with businesses and mixed up addresses. Some places had addresses that do not actually match up with the state they are physically located in and have found no way to edit that.

People mingled about in the air conditioning of their individual businesses or in the heat of the sun talking by the gas stations.

The noise of the auto body shop rang out across the town, merging with the sound of trucks rolling past.

The doors to indoor places remained shut. Both the funeral parlor and the taxidermy shop were only open by request. City hall's doors and windows were closed with papers posted out front with what to do when needing help with bills or schedule a meeting.

While the fire danger level sign was still updated each day, the station was quiet.

“Not just the businesses, but the traffic stopped. People used to pass through here on their way to and from cities. All of a sudden, there were no more cars. No more movement. Time stood still.”

“Until six months ago I had a flip phone. Until three months ago I didn't really know what the internet was. Now my daughter got me a whole website and is showing me how to keep up.”

“In the floral industry, March doesn't matter so much but June! This is necessary. Father's day is here and people need flowers to give to both the live and deceased. . . Flower delivery orders increased because it was a way to tell people they cared.”

“Someone here got it, someone else brought it in from the city. They just stayed home and everyone was fine. If we all just did the same- we could all be fine.”

Jackpot Video Bingo wanted to open up as soon as possible.

They placed plexiglass between each of the slot machines to account for distancing. Every other machine had a sign stating that it closed for social distancing.

The customers just started trickling back in after months. The doors opened for hours every day with the hope that the seats will fill up like they once did.





“The little businesses already couldn’t keep up with Dollar General and Walmart. Now what are we supposed to do?”

-- Gary, brother to Steve of Steve’s Autobody

Caddo Valley

Arkansas

Population: 592

Located right off of a busy highway, fast food chains and motels mixed with local restaurants and inns.

Cars rolled off of the exit, guided by flags and big neon lights promoting cheap gas prices. The people headed straight into the EconoLodge check in or grabbed a bite to eat at Subway.

The big dance hall's for sale sign brought frowns to both locals and passerbies who wonder what could have been in a different time.

Large parking lots, preparing for visitors, remained empty.

Motel signs were either dark or flashing with vacancy.

As one building or restraunt fades into time and town history, a chain pops up in its place. McDonalds and Wendy's now dominate the landscape next to the large Exxon promoting its snacks.

“There’s no more free breakfast, the pool is closed, beds aren’t made each morning because it’s not safe. . . you can’t run a successful lodge right now. It just doesn’t work.



As researchers and scientists worked to develop a vaccine, people continued to catch the virus.

It showed up with unique symptoms in each person. Someone might have a fever, another a cough, and a third every symptom listed.

Some people contracted the disease with no symptoms. Unknowingly, they could spread it to others.

Little was known about how the human system reacts to COVID-19, but more information was gathered each day.

People who lived through the virus could develop long term effects. It was also possible to catch it a second time and go through the myriad of symptoms once again.



“This man’s wife told him he couldn’t have the head in their house but he refuses to part with it. Now that both of them are teleworking, he can’t hide it. So- he pays to leave it here and hangs things from the antlers to actually sell with a nice note requiring offers with over three zeros or no deal! ”

--flea market worker





A Kieran Rundle Production